



National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C. 20594

October 16, 2006

Party Coordinators

Mr. Dana Lee, Athena Construction, Morgan City, LA

Mr. Michael Patterson, Central Boat Rentals, Morgan City, LA

Mr. Brian Osborn, Gulfport Energy, ~~Morgan City, LA~~ Oklahoma City, OK

Mr. Bruce L. Niemeyer, Chevron North America, Lafayette, LA

Mr. Mark Champagne, LA Dept. of Natural Resources, Baton Rouge, LA

Cc: LT John Luff, United States Coast Guard

Gentlemen:


Ref: Fire aboard *Athena Barge 106*, accident number MAR07MM001.

The Safety Board requests that the organizations listed above participate in the *Athena 106* accident as a party to the investigation. You are hereby asked to agree and abide by the provisions of 49 CFR 831.11, which governs participation in Safety Board investigations. Enclosed is a copy of 49 CFR 831.11 for your review. If you have any questions about these rules, please call me. Otherwise, we will assume that you will comply.

As a party representative, you will be given the opportunity to review and make comments on the Safety Board's factual report.

Thank you for your support of marine safety and the *Athena 106* investigation. If you have any questions, please contact me at 202-314-6107 or Morgan.Turrell@ntsb.gov. For additional information, visit www.nts.gov.

Sincerely,


Morgan Turrell
Investigator-in-Charge

Enclosures: 49 CFR 831.11

Please make a copy, sign and return this letter to Morgan Turrell



November 29, 2006

Mr. Morgan Turrell
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Marine Safety
490 L'Enfant Plaza East
Washington, DC 20594

Subject: Public Hearing concerning accident DCA07MM001 - October 12, 2006
Barge Athena 106 fire

Dear Mr. Turrell:

Gulfport Energy Corporation has received your letter of November 20, 2006, regarding a public hearing concerning the subject accident. In our view, a public hearing is not necessary.

Sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covers the signature of Brian Osborn.

Brian Osborn



197 Ivanhoe Texaco Lane
Franklin, Louisiana 70538
Phone: (337) 923-2000
Fax: (337) 923-2001

To: National Transportation Safety Board

From: Melody Medley
Gulfport Energy Corporation

Date: October 15, 2006

Re: Marine Accident in West Cote Blanche Bay

Per NTSB's request, please find attached a rough draft of Gulfport Energy Corporation's timeline of events transpiring on Thursday, October 12, 2006. Because Gulfport Energy has not concluded its investigation of the accident at this time, the attached timeline is a rough draft that is subject to modification as additional facts and other information are discovered.

Rough Draft

TIMELINE

Date: Thursday, October 12, 2006

Place: West Cote Blanche Bay, Louisiana

Incident: Tug Boat *MISS MEGAN*, Athena Construction Barge A-106 and IBR Deck Barge IBR-234 involved in Pipeline Fire (the "Incident")

7:00 am through 11:30 am -- Athena's work crew was removing pilings from storm damage at tank battery 3 in the West Cote Blanche Bay field (the "Field");

11:30 am -- *MISS MEGAN* (the "Tug") began moving Athena construction barge A-106 (the "Spud Barge") and IBR deck barge IBR-234 (the "Deck Barge") to Parker Rig 8B;

11:57 am -- One spud on the Spud Barge fell, striking a natural gas sales pipeline operated by Chevron (the "Pipeline"). Brian Osborn -- Gulfport Energy Operations Manager -- was contacted by Russel Ronkartz (Companyman on Parker Rig 8B) who stated that the Tug and a barge were on fire;

12:00 PM -- Mr. Osborn contacted Harry Schwartz regarding the fire in the Field;

12:05 pm -- Three Grasso employees -- Ricky Albert, Wayne LeBlanc and Jonathan Prince -- notice the Spud Barge and Tug on fire. Mr. Albert was located at a Gulfport Energy compressor station and could see the Spud Barge engulfed in flames;

12:06 pm -- Several events then occurred in rapid succession:

-Mr. Albert telephoned Mr. Osborn and Mr. Schwartz to inform them of the fire. Mr. Osborn and Mr. Schwartz contacted Earl Peterson -- a Grasso Production Clerk contracted to Gulfport Energy -- who was tasked with reporting the Incident to the appropriate authorities.

-Mr. Albert instructed Mr. Prince and Mr. LeBlanc to travel to the accident site and assist the Tug and Spud Barge crewmen. The two men traveled to the accident site to assist the crew, spotted persons in the water, and engaged in rescue efforts. Mr. Prince and Mr.

LeBlanc, while aboard the M/V *CAPTAIN MITCH* – piloted by Brian Romero -- rescued Athena employee Brian Dumcenil;

-Mr. Albert checked Chevron's gas sales meter, and noticed that it was spinning rapidly. Mr. Albert then called Mr. Prince and inquired whether the fire was a result of a break in the Pipeline. Mr. Albert shut the valve. He then instructed Mr. Prince to relocate the *CAPTAIN MITCH* to the north end of the Field and shut the other sales line valve on the Pipeline. Mr. Prince and Mr. LeBlanc encountered Chevron personnel at the valve location, and the Chevron personnel closed their valve.

- Mr. LeBlanc and Mr. Prince attempted to rescue the Tug and Spud Barge crewmen in the water. They then transitioned to the north end of the Field to shut off the sales line valve.

-Mr. Schwartz contacted Mr. Albert and instructed him to shut in the entire Field. This process was completed at approximately 3:00 pm.

12:40 pm – Mr. Peterson reported the Incident to St. Mary Parish Sheriff's Department;

12:50 pm – Mr. Peterson reported the Incident to Petty Officer Emily Clore of the U.S. Coast Guard ("USCG");

1:00 pm – Mr. Peterson reported the Incident to Walter Hingel of the Louisiana State Police, and was assigned incident # 06-06389. At this point, Mr. Peterson noted that the fire was out;

1:13 pm – Mr. Peterson reported the Incident to Mr. Crews at NRC, and received NRC #814478;

1:37 pm –Charles Koval of the National Transportation Safety Board ("NTSB") contacted Mr. Peterson requesting details, and Mr. Peterson provided basic data;

1:42 pm – Mr. Peterson communicated with Emily Clore of the USCG regarding securing a pollution control company;

1:50 pm – Mr. Peterson contacted Jerry Danos of ES&H and requested that ES&H dispatch a crew to the Field;

2:05 pm – Mr. Peterson spoke with Lou Creswell of the U.S. Department of Transportation regarding whether the damaged Pipeline was a regulated line and, if so, who regulated it;

2:09 pm – Mr. Schwartz informs Earl Peterson that the Pipeline was not regulated;

2:20 pm – Mr. Peterson spoke with Mark Champagne of the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Pipeline regarding regulation of the damaged Pipeline. Mr. Champagne indicated that, based on prior experiences, the Pipeline was not regulated;

2:25 pm – Mr. Peterson spoke with Petty Officer Griffin of the USCG regarding notification to families. Mr. Peterson and Mr. Griffin agreed that Central Boat and Athena Construction Company would do so;

2:29 pm – Mr. Peterson spoke with Eddie of Central Boat Rentals (owner of the Tug) and Dana of Athena who each indicated that their respective companies would notify the next of kin;

2:40 pm – Pat Chauvin and Greg Jones of Chevron called Gulfport Energy to offer assistance;

3:10 pm – Kevin Lormand of ES&H arrived to accompany the USCG to the WCBB field and the site of the Incident;

4:32 pm – Charles Koval of the NTSB called to inform Mr. Peterson that himself and other NTSB marine and pipeline personnel would arrive from Washington, D.C. the following day to survey the damage, and requested that the Incident site remain in an unaltered state.

Gulfport Energy is providing this rough draft timeline to the NTSB per its request. Gulfport Energy has informed the NTSB that it has not concluded its investigation of the Incident, and that this timeline is a mere rough draft that is subject to modification as additional information, facts and details are uncovered.